



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 2011

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Tree City USA Program Recognizes “International Year of Forests 2011”

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Illinois Tree City USA and Tree Campus USA program participants are hailing the designation of 2011 as the “International Year of Forests” - an effort promoted by the United Nations to celebrate people’s actions to sustainably manage the world’s forests.

The “International Year of Forests 2011” is also being recognized in the U.S. by the USDA Forest Service and National Association of Foresters with the theme “Celebrate Forests, Celebrate Life.” Representatives of Illinois’ Tree City USA communities met recently in Springfield and Palos Hills to celebrate achievements in urban forestry promotion, and to become the first in the state to participate in an official International Year of Forests event.

“There are many significant achievements, attributes and economic impacts of the forest industry in Illinois, nationally and worldwide that will be celebrated in 2011,” said Marc Miller, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director. “We salute the dedicated local forest advocates from throughout Illinois. With more than 185 communities receiving the ‘Tree City USA’ designation this year, Illinois is second in the nation for the number of communities with that distinguished title. Twelve Illinois-based college campuses have joined the new Tree Campus USA program, making Illinois number one in the nation for the number of Tree Campus award winners.”

Tree City USA communities must designate a city official and/or establish a quasi-government tree board or commission having authority over the management and care of its urban forest; enact a community tree ordinance that specifically recognizes the designated tree authority and identifies urban forest management and tree care standards that the community will abide by; expend at least \$2 per resident for its urban forestry program (Illinois communities have exceeded that national standard by expending an average of \$11.50 per capita); and conduct an annual Arbor Day tree planting ceremony.

At the Illinois Tree City USA conferences this spring, forestry advocates reviewed educational materials on forestry enhancement and promoting the important role forests

play in local communities as well as worldwide; discussed municipal strategies for emerald ash borer mitigation, tree inventories and analysis; and heard a presentation on improvements in urban forest management over the past 20 years in Illinois, including a greater diversity of tree species planted in Tree City USA communities, more tree ordinances in Illinois communities, and the enhanced richness of bird species in Tree City USA communities.

For a list of Illinois Tree City USA, Tree Campus USA and Tree Line USA communities, check the IDNR website at <http://dnr.state.il.us/orc/Urbanforestry/>

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